

Christ the King Abbey

(Traditional Benedictines)

(St Francis of Assisi Chapel)

Cullman, Alabama

Every Sunday:

6:00 AM and 10:00 AM

6:00 AM Daily

Holy Days of Obligation:

6:00 AM - 8:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel

Montgomery, Alabama

10:45 AM

Only on first Sunday
of each month

St Pius V Chapel

Birmingham, Alabama

9:30 AM

Every Sunday except
first Sunday of each month

HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS (Patronal Feast of Benedictines)

Weekly Bulletin #903

Twentieth Sunday after Pentecost

October 2, 2005 – White / Gold

Mass of Feast; Gl; Cr; Pref. Common; Comm. Sunday

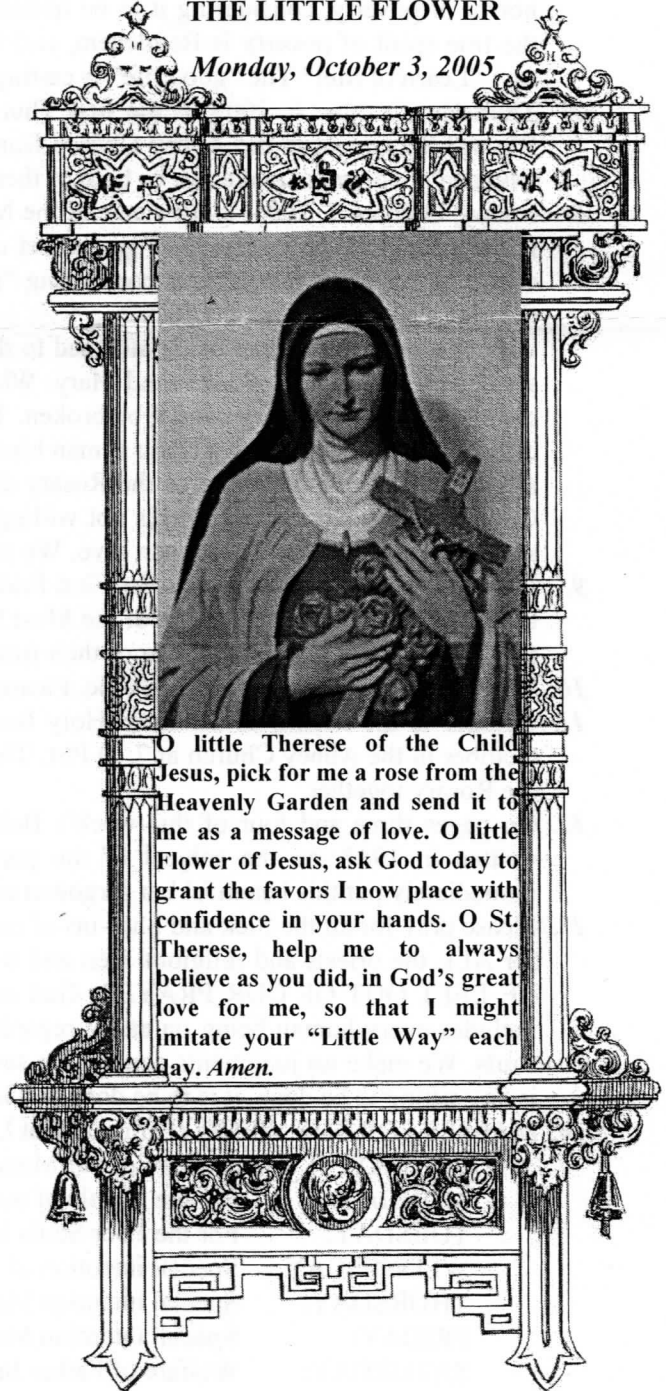
FEAST OF THE HOLY GUARDIAN ANGELS

Sunday, October 2, 2005



FEAST OF SAINT THERESE THE LITTLE FLOWER

Monday, October 3, 2005



1. Because Father is away on the missions today, there will be NO Catechism class this morning.
2. Since today is the first Sunday of the month, there will be NO 5:00 Vespers and Benediction today.
3. **Our Lady of Lourdes Chapel, Montgomery, Alabama:** *Everyone is invited to remain after Mass today for our annual Fall pot-luck picnic. It makes no difference if you did not bring anything, as there is always plenty of food for everyone.*
4. Today is the glorious Feast of the Holy Guardian Angels, and is the Patronal Feast of the Benedictines of Christ the King Abbey and Saint Joseph's Monastery. Today is the day best suited to express our gratitude for and toward our own Guardian Angels. Only after we pass from this life will we come to know how much our Angel has done for us; only then will we come to know how much effort they have put into the salvation of our souls.
5. Tomorrow, October 3, 2005, is the Feast of Saint Theresa the Little Flower, and is the Patronal Feast of our Abbey Church. Our Abbey Church is dedicated to both Saint Joseph and Saint Theresa. Our central prayer tomorrow must be that the Little Flower will obtain for us the graces most apt to help us in our *CONVERSIO*, and which are best suited to lead us along the Little Way she is so well known for.
6. Tuesday, October 4, 2005, is the Feast of Saint Francis of Assisi. It is also the Feast day of our Father Francis, OSB. Please keep Father Francis in your special prayers on this day. How very much do we need Saint Francis' understanding of Poverty, and how much do we need to put that understanding to work. If we do not step away from our love of opulence, God Himself will take steps to teach us the absolute need of the spirit of poverty. Even though we admire "Lady Poverty", and admire Saint Francis' life of poverty, in actual practice we run in horror of poverty, considering it to be nothing less than demeaning destitution. The first practical example of the true spirit of poverty is Bethlehem, and the last practical example of it is Calvary. Did not Christ plainly say: "Learn of Me!" The "good life" is carting so many souls off to hell!
7. Thursday, October 6, 2005, is the first Thursday of October, with Holy Hours and Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament in the Abbey Church from 10:00 AM to 11:00 AM and from 3:30 PM to 4:30 PM. Those who can are urged to make one or both of these Holy Hours. These troubled times demand it of us!
8. Friday, October 7, 2005, is the Feast of the Most Holy Rosary, another tremendous moment of grace. October is quite full of such moments of grace. Let us take advantage of all such opportunities. Even though you are aware of our usual instructions concerning "guaranteed ways to salvation," we must make some exception to the Holy Rosary (though the Rosary also is no "guarantee," if there is no *CONVERSIO*). The Rosary is a chain, with one end of the chain being attached to the heart of the one devoted to the Rosary and the other end being attached to the Hearts of Jesus and Mary. Whereas any chain of use to the workings of man can be broken, the chain of the Holy Rosary cannot be broken. There is no force in hell or on earth that can break that chain. The only one who can break this chain is man himself, who, which God forbid, wishes to be separated from it. As in all such instances, the value of the Rosary depends on the goodwill of the soul who wishes to be a Child of God. If, in actual fact, that soul is not willing to live the Life of Grace, then that soul will not receive the help and protection that the Rosary can give. We strongly recommend at least five decades of the Rosary each day.
9. Friday, October 7, 2005, is also the First Friday of October, with Masses in the Abbey Church at 6:00 AM and 8:00 AM, and all-day Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament from 10:00 AM until 6:00 PM. Those who can are urged to give at least one hour of their time in Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.
10. All Souls Day Envelopes are available. Please return them **BEFORE** November 1, 2005.
11. October is the Month of the most Holy Rosary. The Rosary will be recited each evening of the month of October in the Abbey Church at 7:10 PM. Those who can are urged to join the Monks and the Nuns in reciting the Rosary together.
12. On pages three and four of this week's Bulletin is to be found the contents of a wonderful little pamphlet, written in 1947, on the subject of the parental blessing of children. Please read this carefully and then immediately put this beautiful but forgotten custom into practice in your own families.
13. Please pray for all the Sick and Shut-ins of our Chapels. **LET US ALSO PRAY FOR EVERYONE.** Let us pray for ALL the priests and religious men and women of the world. **NO MAN, WOMAN, OR CHILD SHOULD BE LEFT OUT OF OUR PRAYER.** God made all men to be with Him in heaven for all eternity, and this includes every human being on earth, regardless of station or condition or place. Our only duty is to pray for **souls**. We make **no** judgments concerning such matters as who is or who is not deserving of salvation. If there is any sifting to be done, it is to be done by God, Himself alone. **We are NOT** the ones to do the sifting.
14. **MASSES FOR THE WEEK:** (Father Abbot Leonard's schedule only)

SUNDAY:	Welfare of our Monastic Communities (<i>Feast of the Guardian Angels</i>)
MONDAY:	For the People of our Chapels
TUESDAY:	For the Poor Souls in Purgatory
WEDNESDAY:	Special intention of the Donor
THURSDAY:	Special intention Maria Morin
FRIDAY:	Special intention Mary Brueggemann
SATURDAY:	Welfare of Father James Wathen

BLESS YOUR CHILDREN

by Archabbot Ignatius Esser, OSB

(June 25, 1947)

Is the average home as good as it used to be? To even a superficial observer the waning unity in modern family life is a source of sad regret. The scattered members of many families seem never to have experienced "*how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.*"

Autos, movies, public recreation grounds, multiplied societies and clubs, are often pointed out as disruptive factors that gradually annihilate the sweet charm of home life. Home, in many instances, is rather a place to be shunned than a haven to be sought.

However, cars, movies, public recreation grounds, societies, and clubs, are not the causes of family disunion. Nor is even an abuse of these things the cause of such disunion. Their abuse is merely the manifestation of a want of family union and home attraction. The sorest need in family life today is a unifying principle, a bond that will cement the members of a family together so tightly that disruptive agencies will lose their power. Natural ties are not strong enough; they can be overcome by natural forces. The truly unifying principle in the family must be supernatural.

There exists such a supernatural, unifying principle, but it is sadly neglected. In fact, it is wholly unknown to many of those even whose privilege it is to apply it. How few persons there are that know anything about *parental blessing*. Did you ever bless your children?

Our Lord used to gather little children around Himself and bless them. "Suffer the little children to come unto Me," He said. "And embracing them, and laying His hands upon them, He blessed them." Parents of today love their children. They embrace them. Why do they not lay their hands upon them and bless them? Jesus wants children to be blessed.

Certainly the blessing bestowed on children by Jesus was more efficacious than that which is bestowed on them by their parents. So also is the blessing imparted by a priest more efficacious than the parental blessing. Even so, the parental blessing is something so holy, so efficacious, that it deserves to be called the "Sacramental of the Domestic Hearth." How beautiful is the picture of a young mother, imposing hands of benediction on a child of tender years and spotless innocence. No less beautiful is the picture of an aged parent, bestowing with trembling hands, a blessing on a full-grown son and daughter.

O yes, dear fathers and mothers, this is a privilege that is yours. Often you are urged to do your duty. Here is one time that you are urged to use a privilege that is yours by divine grant – a privilege that goes with the sweet dignity of parenthood.

Parental blessing is as old as the human race. It began with the oldest patriarchs. Throughout the Old Testament it was the usual method of transmitting divine favors. The blessing conferred on their children by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, are known to all that read the Sacred Scriptures. These same Scriptures give us an authoritative statement on parental blessing. "Honor thy father, in word and work, and in all patience, that a blessing may remain in the latter end. The father's blessing established the houses of the children; but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation" (Ecclus. 3: 9, 11).

Many are the Scriptural instances whereby the efficacy of a parent's blessing, and also a parent's curse, is proved. We know the interesting story of Tobias, how he made a long journey with the Angel Raphael, who in disguise acted as a traveling companion. That was a most successful and profitable journey. Besides a safe return it included: the collection of money, the deliverance of the young Tobias from the dangerous fish, the winning of an excellent wife for the son, and the curing of the father's blindness. Before setting out, the young Tobias received his father's blessing in the following grand words: "May you have a good journey, and God be with you in your way, and His angel accompany you."

Nowadays a person so rarely sees parents bless their children, that he is inclined to think the privilege no longer exists. Has the parental blessing lost its efficacy in the New Testament? Has Christ's coming changed the essential relation between parent and child? Has matrimony, elevated by the Savior to the dignity of a Sacrament, been lowered in spiritual values? Most certainly not! Jesus, in the New Testament, has increased the number and capacity of the channels of grace, of which the parental blessing is one.

Parental blessing is parental blessing still. The scattered family and the empty hearth are but the concomitant of parental blessing neglected. If this "Sacramental of the Domestic Hearth" were more frequently administered, there would be more happy and contented families. The two indispensable factors of happiness in a home, are amiable authority on the part of parents, and loving obedience on the part of children.

Parents that bless are more keenly conscious of their responsible dignity. In their power to bless they recognize the channel of grace that they do not want to obstruct by disedifying example.

It is easy for a child to see God's representative in a parent before whom it frequently kneels for blessing. With this recognition comes the love, reverence and obedience that children owe to their parents.

If your home is not all that you would like it to be, try adding the following ingredients: edification, love, reverence and obedience. You get them all, and much more, too, out of the parental blessing. These are the things that make the homes out of which saints come forth.

In the lives of the saints and the saintly, we find many beautiful examples that help to spur us on in fostering this worthy custom. The last words of the mother of St. Gregory of Nyssa, were her words of benediction pronounced over her ten children, some of them absent, some present. The dying mother of St. Edmund called her boy from Paris to England to bestow on him her blessing. St. Thomas More, even when a married man, advanced in years and official dignity – he was Lord Chancellor of England – never left his father’s house without that aged parent’s blessing.

The Little Flower of Jesus, whose charming child-like sanctity has made her so popular, undoubtedly owes some of her exalted holiness to her parents’ blessing. The custom of blessing the children prevailed in the home of the Little Flower. In her autobiography she expressly mentions the blessing received from her father on one momentous occasion. It was the day she entered the convent. Hear her speak for herself: “The next morning, after a last look at the happy home of my childhood, I set out for the Carmel, where we all heard Mass (April 9, 1888). I embraced all my dear ones, and knelt for my father’s blessing. He, too, knelt down and blessed me through his tears.”

A little more than two years ago our Catholic papers attracted the attention of readers with the headline: “Bishop Kneels for Mother’s Blessing.” It was the Right Reverend F. T. Roch, D.D., Bishop of Tuticurin, India. He met his mother at the railway station. There, in the presence of a multitude of people, he “knelt before his mother to receive her blessing, and the grand old lady, placing her wrinkled hands on the head of her illustrious son, moved many a spectator to tears.”

Dear fathers and mothers, open up to your children this choice channel of grace. Make a diligent and frequent use of this greatest privilege of parents.

You may wonder when parents ought to bless their children. They ought to bless them often. At night after evening prayers is a very good time to bestow a daily blessing. Before going on a journey or undertaking an important or a dangerous occupation; also during sickness, sons and daughters ought to get their parents’ blessing. At the more important turning points in life, fathers and mothers ought solemnly to bless their children, thus, upon their entering school, on their First Communion day, on their wedding day, or when they leave to enter the convent or monastery, or the holy priesthood. Send a blessing even to your absent children. Before you go to bed at night, think of the absent son or daughter. They may be in sore need of your help. Your blessing is the most powerful help that you can give them. Protect them with the Sacred Cross that you make over them. Include a “God bless you, my child,” in the letters to your children. Your last blessing should be given to all your children, when you are at the point of death.

How is the parental blessing given? In the most simple, yet impressive manner. Place your hand on the head of the kneeling child. Say: “*I bless you, my child, in the name of the Father,*” etc., make the sign of the cross upon the forehead with the thumb of the right hand. If you bless all your children at once, simply extend your right hand over all, and trace a cross over them, while you pronounce the above words. Any other appropriate words of your own choice may be used. Vary them to suit the occasion. The words of Tobias quoted above, are beautiful words of blessing for one about to make a long journey. Simply let the words of blessing indicate what you wish your children.

After reading this, what will be the attitude of parents, sons, and daughters, towards the practice of parental blessing? Young parents will welcome this happy privilege of which they perhaps knew absolutely nothing. With joy will the proud young father and the jubilant young mother lay hands of blessing upon their precious baby. The practice once begun will be easily kept up.

But what about older families, where through ignorance of this beautiful custom, the parental blessing was never given? Rather reluctantly will aged parents make this start in the evening of their married life. Yet they surely will not refuse their blessing if their grown-up sons and daughters ask for it. Nor ought these to hesitate in asking for a gift that surpasses all natural gifts that parents can give them.

Good father and mothers, you have endured much labor, fatigue, and pain, to give your children natural gifts, life and life’s accessories. Generously add to your bounteous bestowals the crowning complement – your blessing. This one treasure will supernaturalize the rest.

St. Ambrose says: “You may not be rich; you may be unable to bequeath any great possessions to your children; but one thing you can give them: the heritage of your blessing. And it is better to be blessed than to be rich.” May God doubly bless the parents that bless their children.

PRAYER FOR CHILDREN: O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, You were begotten in eternity yet willed to be born in time. You loved the innocence of childhood and lovingly embraced and blessed the little children brought to You. Anticipate the needs of this child (these children) with Your tender blessings, and grant that no evil may corrupt his (her/their) mind(s) but that, advancing in age, in wisdom, and in grace, he (she/they) may live so as to please you always. You Who live and reign with God the Father in the Unity of the Holy Spirit, God, forever and ever. Amen.

(Collectio Rituum)

PRAYER FOR YOUTH: Almighty God, Who through Your own Divine Son, Jesus Christ, gives the example and through grace the power of worthy youth, grant unto the youth of our day an abiding personal rectitude and fidelity, and deepen in them the conviction that with them rest the worth of the world in the coming years, the increase of the communion of Saints, the eternal glory of Your Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen. *(Pope Pius XII)* □